

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS CAIRO 008081

SIPDIS

SENSITIVE

NEA FOR FO, ELA, RA  
NEA PLEASE PASS USTR

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [ETRD](#) [PREL](#) [EAGR](#) [EG](#) [WTRO](#)

SUBJECT: MINISTER OF FOREIGN TRADE AND AMBASSADOR DISCUSS  
FTA, WTO, AND ANTI-CORRUPTION

The following is Sensitive but Unclassified. Please protect accordingly.

-----  
Summary  
-----

1. (SBU) In an October 17 meeting, Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry Rashid pressed for a specific date for the start of FTA negotiations, and said that Egypt supports the U.S. on WTO Ag reform. Rashid took on board the Ambassador's call to make anti-corruption a plank of the NDP parliamentary campaign. End Summary.

2. (U) On October 17, Ambassador and Econoff met with Minister of Foreign Trade and Industry Rashid Rashid in his office. First Assistant to the Minister Dr. Samiha Fawzy and First Undersecretary Dr. Ashraf El Rabiey also attended.

-----  
TIFA/FTA  
-----

3. (SBU) Rashid said he feels that things are moving on the FTA front, but needs clarity on a potential notification date in order to coordinate Egyptian next steps, including his travel to the U.S. Rashid is amenable to including a TIFA Council meeting during his visit, but again said this should be linked to an FTA announcement. He plans to discuss this further with USTR Portman when he sees him in Switzerland Nov. 7 - 8. Rashid added that a delegation drawn from the Egyptian membership of the Egyptian-American Business Council members would like to join on his visit. He hopes for meetings at State, Commerce, NSC and Congress.

-----  
WTO Ag Proposal  
-----

4. (SBU) Responding to our demarche on U.S. WTO agriculture reform proposals (demarche report septel), Rashid said he had pressed the Europeans on US proposals and would continue to do so. He said he made it very clear in Zurich that Egypt seeks more market access, and added that Ambassador Portman "made a big step" with the U.S. proposal.

-----  
Anti-Corruption  
-----

5. (SBU) Ambassador pressed Rashid and the NDP to go on the offensive in fighting corruption in Egypt and take concrete steps to ensure credibility of the effort. With President Mubarak leading the effort, the U.S. stands ready to support through technical or other assistance more directly targeted to support GOE anti-corruption efforts. Deputy Minister Samiha Fawzy commented that Gamal Mubarak would be the one to grab the reins on this issue and run with it. She said he is well versed in the G-8 process and would respond positively. Rabiey commented that some arrests would also help get the message out. Commenting on electoral transparency, Rashid predicted positive steps regarding transparent ballot boxes and local observers.

-----  
Corporate Complaints  
-----

6. (SBU) Referring to concerns brought to us by Northrup-Grumman regarding their feeling "locked out" of contracts tendered by the Ministry of Civil Aviation, the Ambassador asked Rashid to ensure that Northrup-Grumman, and all American firms, get a fair shake in bidding for civil aircraft contracts. While Boeing had recently been successful in an aircraft sale to EgyptAir, there appeared to be a string of contracts where U.S. firms either were not invited to bid or invited only very late in the game. Rashid said that he had been "involved" with the Ministry of Civil Aviation on Northrup's case since he took office over a year ago. He

would continue to follow the issue and he endorsed  
Ambassador's intent to take up the issue with Minister Shafik  
directly.

RICCIARDONE